

**Remarks in Manchester,  
New Hampshire**  
*October 29, 2004*

**The President.** Thank you all. Thank you all for coming. Thanks for coming. We are honored you are here. Thanks for being here today. You've lifted our spirits. And with your help, we'll carry New Hampshire and win a great victory next Tuesday.

I want to thank my friends Senator Judd Gregg and Kathy. I want to thank Senator Sununu, Congressman Bradley, Congressman Bass, Governor Benson—put him back in. Put Gregg back in too. Most of all, thank you for coming.

Laura and I are thrilled you are here. You know, I'm here to tell the people of New Hampshire, you need to put me back in for a reason. Perhaps the most important one of all is so that Laura is the First Lady for 4 more years. I love her dearly. She is a great First Lady.

In the final 4 days of this historic campaign, I'm taking my vision of a more hopeful America directly to the people of this country. That's what I've come to New Hampshire about, to talk about a hopeful future for all of us. Today, our economy is strong, and it is getting stronger. The tax relief we passed is working. Think about this: Homeownership rate is at an alltime high in America. More minority families own a home than ever before in our Nation's history. Our farmers are making a good living. The entrepreneurial spirit is strong in America.

In the course of traveling your State, I met a lot of small-business owners who are making a good living because of our tax relief and because of their ingenuity and vision. And because they're making a good living, they're hiring people. We've added 1.9 million new jobs across this country in the last 13 months. The national unemployment rate is 5.4 percent. Let me put that in perspective for you. That's lower than the average rate of the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s. The unemployment rate in the great State of New Hampshire is 3.5 percent. Our economic policies are working.

In a new term, we'll keep your taxes low. We'll reduce the regulations. We'll do something about these lawsuits. We will put plans

in place to make sure the entrepreneurial spirit is strong so people can continue to work.

When I campaigned in 2000, I promised to challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations in our public schools. I kept my word. In a new term, we'll stay on the path of reform and results in all our schools so no child is left behind in America. In a new term, we'll make sure health care is more affordable and accessible for our families. In all we do to reform health care, we will make sure the health care decisions are made by doctors and patients, not by officials in Washington, DC. In a new term, we'll keep the promise of Social Security for our seniors and strengthen the system for our children and our grandchildren. In a new term, we'll protect marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society.

And all the progress we hope to make depends on the security of our Nation. We face enemies who hate our country and would do anything to harm us. I will fight these enemies with every asset of our national power. We will do our duty, and we will protect the American people.

**Audience members.** Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

**The President.** On September the 11th, 2001, our Nation suffered terrible harm, and the pain was greatest for our families of the lost. With us today are Ernie Strada and his wife, Mary Ann, who lost their son, Tom, at the World Trade Center. Please welcome the Stradas. The September 11th families will always be in our thoughts and always be in our prayers. This Nation must never forget their pain.

On the day of that tragedy, I made a decision: America will no longer respond to terrorist murder with half-measures and empty threats. We will no longer look away from gathering dangers and simply hope for the best. We are pursuing a comprehensive strategy to fight the terrorist enemy and defend America. We will not relent, and we will prevail.

First, we're on the offensive against the terrorist networks. The best way to prevent future attacks is to go after the enemy. We will confront the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. We are

waging a global campaign from the mountains of Central Asia to the deserts of the Middle East, from the Horn of Africa to the Philippines. We're getting results. Since September the 11th, more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's key members and associates have been detained or killed, and the rest of them know we are on their trail.

Secondly, we are confronting regimes that harbor terrorists and feed the terrorists and support the terrorists. I set a doctrine that these regimes are equally as guilty as the terrorists. When a President speaks, he must speak clearly and he must mean what he says. I meant what I said, and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan doubted our commitment. The regime is no more, and America and the world are safer.

Third, we're confronting outlaw regimes that pursue weapons of mass destruction, have ties to terror, and defy the world. A lesson of September the 11th is we must never allow the terrorists to gain the world's most dangerous weapons. Saddam Hussein chose to defy the world. He doubted our resolve, and America and the world are safer because he is sitting in a prison cell. And that message was heard in Libya, which has now given up its weapons of mass destruction programs, and that has made America and the world safer.

Fourth, we're promoting freedom and democracy in the broader Middle East. If 20 years from now the Middle East is dominated by dictators and mullahs who build weapons of mass destruction and harbor terrorists, our children and our grandchildren will grow up in a nightmare world of danger. This does not have to happen. We have a duty to protect ourselves and to protect future generations of Americans.

By taking the side of reformers and democrats in the Middle East, we will gain allies in the war on terror. And we'll isolate the ideology of hatred, and we'll help defeat the despair and hopelessness that feeds terror. So we're helping to build free societies in Afghanistan and Iraq and across that troubled region. Freedom is on the march, and America and the world are more secure.

Our strategy to win the war on terror is succeeding. We are shrinking the area where terrorists can operate freely. We have the ter-

rorists on the run. And so long as I am your President, we'll be determined and steadfast, and we will keep the terrorists on the run.

**Audience members.** Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

**The President.** To win the war on terror, to do our duty, America needs an unwavering commitment to see the task through. In any war, there are good days and there are bad days, but everyday, you need the same resolve.

When I took the oath of office 4 years ago, none of us could have envisioned what these years would bring. We've been through a lot together. My years as your President have confirmed some lessons and have taught me some new ones. One of the things I've learned about the Presidency is that whatever your strengths are, you're going to need them, and whatever your shortcomings are, people are going to notice them. [Laughter] Sometimes, I'm a little too blunt. I get that from my mother. Sometimes, I mangle the English language. [Laughter] I get that from my dad. But all the times, you know where I stand, what I believe, and where I'm going to lead this country.

A President must make America's priorities absolutely clear, especially in our uncertain world. I've learned firsthand how hard it is to send young men and women into battle, even when the cause is right. I've been reminded that the world looks to America for leadership, and it is crucial for the American President to be consistent. I have learned a President must base decisions on principle, core convictions from which he will never waver. The issues vary. The challenges are different every day. The polls go up; the polls go down. But a President's convictions must be consistent and true.

And through these 4 years, I have learned anew the enduring character of this great Nation. I have met exceptional men and women during my time as your President. I have seen their strength and their sacrifice, and their examples have confirmed there is no limit to the greatness of America. I have seen the character in people like Cheryl McGuinness, Debra Burlingame, and Elizabeth Kovalcin, who are with us today.

Cheryl's husband, Tom, and Debra's brother, Charles, were both pilots who lost

their lives on September the 11th. Elizabeth's husband, David, was a passenger on Flight 11. These women have shown that hope can be found even in the worst tragedy. Cheryl says this: "While those terrorists may have killed almost 3,000 of our husbands and wives, mothers and fathers, children and friends on that day, they did not take away our spirit, our hope, or the promise of tomorrow." There is hope beyond the ashes of September the 11th, and nobody can take that away from us.

I've seen the character of America in people like Lisa Beamer and the husband she lost. Todd Beamer and other passengers on Flight 93 rushed those hijackers and led the first counterattack in the war on terror. Todd's final words captured the spirit of a nation. He said a prayer, and then he said, "Let's roll." Todd's dad, David Beamer, is with us today. I have been honored to have met Lisa as well. In terrible sadness, this family has been a model of grace, their own and the grace of God.

Just over a month after her husband's death, Lisa decided to take the same Newark-to-San Francisco flight that Todd had taken. And she explained, "I won't be held captive by fear." In the years to come, Lisa's words must be remembered by all Americans. As we fight the terrorists, they will try to frighten us. They will test our will by their barbaric tactics. We must be resolved. So long as I'm your President, we will not be held captive by fear.

The enemies who hit our country on September the 11th thought Americans would be fearful and weak. Instead, the world saw courageous rescuers, like New York City firefighters Michael Boyle and Tim and Tom Haskell, who ran toward danger. Michael's father, Jimmy, is with us today. Also with us is Ken Haskell, brother of Tim and Tom. America honors the courage of our first-responders. And we must always be grateful to those who carry out the great tradition of bravery and courage in the likes of Michael, Tim, and Tom.

After September the 11th, the world saw strangers comforting each other and a nation united in pride and defiance. For 3 years, the people of this country have shown patience and purpose in the hard tasks of his-

tory. We've risen to great challenges, and every American can be proud of their country.

I have seen the spirit of our country in those who wear our Nation's uniform, people like Mike McNaughton. Mike is a platoon sergeant from the Louisiana National Guard. He enlisted after September the 11th. He fought in Afghanistan and lost two fingers and a leg. I remember visiting Mike in the hospital. I said, "What do you like to do?" He said, "I like to run." I said, "Well, someday, you and I are going to run on the South Lawn of the White House." I don't know if he believed me at the time, but one day he showed up at the South Lawn of the White House, and we ran. I will never forget his determination and his courage and his sacrifice for our freedom.

I've spoken with so many of our people in uniform, from bases across America to a Thanksgiving in Baghdad. And I know their courage and their honor. They have fought our enemies with skill. They have treated the innocent with kindness, and they have delivered millions from oppression.

I have returned the salute of the wounded who told me they were only doing their duty. I've tried my best to comfort the families of the lost who told me to honor their loved ones by completing the mission. Like the men of Normandy and Iwo Jima before them, another great generation is serving America today, and our Nation is proud to stand with them.

All Americans must always remember the debt this Nation owes to the men and women who defend us. Those who wear the uniform are people of great character and service and duty and honor. We are thankful. And as we remember those who wear the uniform today, we must always remember the veterans who have set such a good example for today's men and women. And we are grateful to our military families for their sacrifice. And as long as I am the Commander in Chief, I assure you, we will keep our commitment we have made to our troops and their families. They will have the resources they need to complete their missions. As America saw on the \$87 billion supplemental request, when I say something, I mean it.

We are not in this war alone. We must remember, our cause has been joined by many great nations and strong leaders. I've seen the determination of allies like Prime Minister Tony Blair of Great Britain. The Prime Minister and I come from different political backgrounds and traditions, yet we share a clear understanding of the threat we face and our duty to defeat it. I remember a phone call I had with Prime Minister Blair on a Sunday morning early last year. I called him when he was facing a political crisis at home. I told him I wanted him as an ally, but if politics was such that he could not commit British troops to combat in Iraq, I would understand. The Prime Minister replied that he believed our cause was right, and because it was right, Britain would join us. He said, "I am with you, and I mean it." That day I heard the spirit of Winston Churchill in the Prime Minister of Britain.

More than 90 countries share this commitment in the war on terror, because they understand this is civilization's fight. All 26 NATO nations have personnel in Iraq, Afghanistan, or both. And 14 of the countries that have joined our coalition in Iraq have lost forces in our vital work. In the war on terror, America has led; many have joined; and America and the world are safer.

We must always remember the steadfast conviction of our good allies. Their contributions and their sacrifice must never be dismissed or denigrated. They have earned the gratitude of the American people. In a new term, in order to secure America, I will continue to work with our allies. We will strengthen our alliances. But I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

As the President, I've also seen the spirit of the people we have liberated. I will never forget the day when seven Iraqi men came into the Oval Office. Coming into the Oval Office can be sometimes a awe-inspiring experience. It's a magnificent shrine to democracy. They came in—they had all had their right hands cut off by Saddam Hussein. They had had their hands cut off because his currency had been devalued and he needed a scapegoat. These men had been discovered in Iraq, had been flown to America to get a prosthesis, a new hand.

I told them, I said, "Welcome to the Oval Office. As we helped secure liberty in your country, we'll make sure—and you need to make sure—the institutions are bigger than the people who occupy the offices." That's certainly the case of the Oval Office. The institution of the President is always bigger than the person. I told them that by having the institutions bigger than the people, never again will somebody be able to pluck them out of society and arbitrarily cut off their right hands.

I will never forget the moment when one of those Iraqi men grabbed a Sharpie and in his new hand that he was just learning to use, slowly wrote out in Arabic a prayer for God to bless America. America should always be proud that our country remains the hope of the oppressed and the greatest force for good on this Earth.

Just last month, I welcomed Iraq's Prime Minister Allawi to the White House. For decades, he was a fearless critic of Saddam Hussein. As a matter of fact, in 1978, a team of assassins sent by the dictator attacked Dr. Allawi and his wife with axes and nearly killed him. He is a courageous man. Saddam Hussein knows the man he tried to murder is the leader of a free Iraq. Prime Minister Allawi is now confronting the enemies of freedom with strong determination. In the Rose Garden, he said that his nation would fight the terrorists in Iraq, room to room and house to house, so that the people of Iraq would never again have to live in tyranny.

Our mission in Iraq is clear. We are helping Iraq's new Government train armies and police forces and security forces so they can do the hard work of defending their freedom, so they can stand up and fight the terrorists who are trying to stop the advance of liberty. We'll help Iraq get on the path to stability and democracy as quickly as possible, and then our troops will come home with the honor they have earned.

The will of the Iraqis is strong, and their dream for freedom is moving forward. The terrorists are brutal and cruel. Yet everyday, Iraq and coalition forces are defeating the enemy's strategic objectives. The enemy in Iraq wants to establish terrorist bases from which to operate. We are on the offensive. We are denying them sanctuary. The enemy

wants to intimidate Iraqis from joining the security forces, yet more 100,000 Iraqi soldiers and police and border guards are bravely serving their country. The enemy seeks to disrupt the march toward democracy, but Iraqis are preparing for free elections on schedule this coming January. The violent acts of a few will not divert Iraqis or our coalition from the mission we have accepted. Iraq will be free. Iraqis will be secure. And the terrorists will fail.

The Afghan people are also showing their character. The terrorists did everything they could to stop this month's elections, but the will of the Afghan people was more powerful than the hatred of the killers. Millions of Afghans lined up at the polls. The first vote in the Presidential election—the first voter was a 19-year-old woman. Imagine what the Taliban would have said about that. [*Laughter*]

The new President, Hamid Karzai, is a brave, respected leader who traveled southern Afghanistan by horseback to rally forces against the Taliban. Three years ago, his country was the training camp of Al Qaida. Now it is a democracy, a friend of America, and an ally in the war on terror.

By acting in Afghanistan and Iraq, we removed threats. We're making our country safer. We are also living up to the highest calling of our history. We're the Nation that freed Europe and lifted up former enemies in Germany and Japan. And we gave hope to captive peoples behind the Iron Curtain. The liberation of more than 50 million people in our time is a noble achievement, and every American can be proud of that achievement.

We must always remember the principles of our founding and the hope that our country has brought to the world. As long as I'm your President, this Nation will stand for freedom and stand by our friends and never cut and run. I believe everybody wants to be free. Freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

These experiences have helped shape my view of the world and the kind of leader I am. And one of the most powerful and defining experiences took place on September the 14th, 2001. George Howard, an officer with

the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, was off-duty on September the 11th. But when he learned the news, he went right to the Twin Towers. He died trying to save others. On that day of September the 14th, I met his mom, Arlene, who is with us today. She gave me George's police shield. She asked me not to forget the fallen. I carry Shield Number 1012. I will never forget the fallen. God bless you, Arlene.

Time passes, but we must always remember the enemy that kills without shame or mercy. I will always remember the men in hardhats at Ground Zero shouting at me at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes." My determination has not faded since that day. My determination is wrong—strong. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

We have come so far. We've accomplished so much. Yet, our work is not finished. All of us are part of a great historic endeavor. We will lead our country through a time of danger. We will build a world of freedom and peace beyond the war of terror. I know we'll succeed. I know the character of the American people.

The polls open in Manchester at 6 a.m. on Tuesday. For a safer America, for a stronger America, and for a better America, I ask the people of New Hampshire to vote for me.

God bless you, and God bless America. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:56 a.m. at the Verizon Wireless Arena. In his remarks, he referred to Kathleen MacLellan Gregg, wife of Senator Judd Gregg; Gov. Craig Benson of New Hampshire; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Prime Minister Ayad Allawi of the Iraqi Interim Government; and President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan.

## Remarks in Portsmouth, New Hampshire

October 29, 2004

**The President.** Thank you all for coming. We are honored to be back. Such a beautiful